

**PARK BOARD MEETING  
Foster Community Center  
February 10, 2016**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Rick Kibbey, Veronica Gracia-Wing, Bryan Beverly, Rosalinda Hernandez, Rita O'Brien,

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Gib King, Paul Holland, Jim McClurken

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Brett Kaschinske, Parks and Recreation Director; Kellie Brown, Board Secretary; Dick Peffley, General Manager, Calvin Jones, Wayne Lynn, Dave Bolan, Stephen Serkaian, Chris Knudstrup, Lansing Board of Water and Light (BWL); Bob Ford, Landscape, Architect, Planners (LAP); Liz Roxberry, Executive Director, Fenner Nature Center; Dwight Washington; Nancy Mahlow, Eastside Neighborhood Organization; Becky Palmer-Scott, Phillip Lamoureux, Theron Smith, Helen Smith, Jeff Potter, John Flaherty, Friends of Bancroft Park; Dennis Louney, Spicer Group

**CALLED TO ORDER:** 7:03 p.m.

**ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA**

Brett Kaschinske added Ingham Trails under updates and Concept Baseball under old business

**STATEMENTS OF CITIZENS**

Dwight Washington inquired about his request in the Master Plan for pursuit of diverse recreational activities. This was added under old business.

**BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

Bryan Beverly moved to approve the January 13, 2016 minutes as submitted; seconded by Rosalinda Hernandez.  
5 yeas; 0 nays

**Motion carried.**

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Central Substation BWL**

Brett Kaschinske introduced the representatives from the Lansing Board of Water and Light and stated a public announcement was made at 12 p.m. on Monday, February 8, 2016 regarding a new central sub-station located at Scott Park.

Chris Knudstrup, BWL, stated with the planned closing of the Eckert plant in 2020 there is a need for a new power station. Eckert currently supplies one-third of Lansing. The ideal location for the new substation would be south of 496 and Scott Park is located in the center of current lines.

Bob Ford, LAP, reviewed the history of the Scott Mansion and the relocation of the Jenison House to Scott Park and the renaming to Scott Center.

Ford provided a PowerPoint presentation of the current property and conceptual layout of the new plan.

Cooley Gardens is protected by a deed covenant and cannot be included in this project; however, the sunken gardens are proposed to be moved closer to Cooley Gardens to provide better access.

Ford reviewed new access points of entry into the gardens and new walkways that will be ADA accessible. He described new views of the river and gardens from the walkway.

There will be a fishing dock and platform from the existing River Trail on the south side of the river with ADA accessibility.

Ford reviewed the addition of the recreation loop, allowing individuals within REO Town a place to walk as well as the wall “façade” with art work and columns entering REO Town.

The southeast corner would have an access door into the plant and the entrance of the walkway with a sign laid into the brick directing visitors to the gardens.

The southwest corner would overlook the river and River Trail.

Ford provided a list of current activities at the facility and the proposed extended list of activities and amenities.

There will be a public charrette on February 23, 2016 at 6 p.m. at the Depot in REO Town, 1201 S. Washington.

Rick Kibbey inquired if the new sunken gardens would be above or below the steep slope; Ford replied above. Also is the access Washington above or below; Ford stated it is at grade. Is the Women’s Historical Center covered by the same deed restrictions; Ford stated no.

Rosalinda Hernandez inquired if there is a design of the inside of the plant; not at this time.

Bryan Beverly inquired if this represents one-half of the Eckert plant, and if so where is the rest going to be and what is the available parking going to be versus what is currently available.

Ford stated currently there are 45 parking spaces and there will be 43 with the new plan. Chris Knudstrup stated there are plans for plants on Verlinden and MLK south of the river.

Brett Kaschinske stated he met with the Garden Club on Monday and they are not pleased with the garden being moved. He inquired if they would be willing to maintain the new garden and if not, the department and board will need to discuss if it can be kept or not. Kaschinske will have a follow-up meeting with the Garden Club.

Bryan Beverly inquired about the location of the access door and the walkway and safety issues.

Chris Knudstrup stated the BWL only visits sub-stations once a week and if there were major work needed involving more trucks and traffic, they would place a flagman on site.

Rita O’Brien inquired about the noise and disturbing the gardens.

Chris Knudstrup stated current transformers for this type of area are purchased with low volume; they do have fans on them but will only run occasionally. Dave Bolan stated the traffic from 496 would be heard more than the transformers.

Veronica Gracia-Wing inquired about the plans for the Scott House.

Brett Kaschinske stated there are three options that will be put out to bid; one will be to move the house, the second is to reclaim the wood, doors, windows, etc. and the third option is to demolish the house.

From the audience a question was asked about other locations and placing this underground.

Chris Knudstrup stated BWL looked at sites on the north and the south, but this plant needs an entire city block. The price and current location of the lines were deciding factors. Placing equipment underground is extremely expensive, plus the BWL does not have technology to do so at this time.

Veronica Gracia-Wing inquired outside of the charrette on February 23 and speaking with the REO Town population, are there other charrettes planned; Ford stated not at this time.

Veronica Gracia-Wing inquired about a time line.

The plan is to break ground this fall and the project will take two (2) years.

Rick Kibbey inquired about the view from Fountain Place apartments. Ford stated the building is 10 stories high, in the summer there will be a canopy of trees blocking the view and in the winter the visibility inside the plant starts at the 7<sup>th</sup> floor of the apartment building.

Bob Ford said the existing riverfront and bank will remain.

Dick Peffley stated in some cases presentations and designs are made to the public, however when the project is done the design can be entirely different. However, he guarantees, unless something changes with the February 23 charrette, this substation will be as it was presented this evening. His last two projects in REO Town pertaining to the BWL offices were built as presented to the public and so will this project.

Brett Kaschinske stated this is not an action item this evening. The Board will need to act at the March meeting to amend the City's Master Plan to un-dedicate this land unless they wish to do so this evening.

Rick Kibbey recommended waiting to act on this at the March meeting.

Rick Kibbey thanked the BWL for stepping in to assist with the Flint water issue and helping with the replacement of the pipes in Flint.

The audience applauded and thanked the BWL for their work on this project and bringing it to the public for discussion. The presentation answered several questions and it is appreciated the work that went into the design to make it appealing to look at.

### **Red Cedar (Montgomery Drain)**

Dennis Louney, Public Affairs Representative, Spicer Group, stated his purpose for being here this evening is to layout the process and timeline for the Montgomery Drain.

In December the DEQ approved Part 301 Inland Lake and Stream Impacts and Part 303 Wetland Impacts to work in the flood plain. In January, Drain Commissioner Lindemann signed paperwork providing him 60 days to obtain easements. Paperwork is due to the clerk next week and on February 22, 2016 this will be before Council to refer to the Parks and Planning and Development Departments.

Dennis Louney stated he would like to bring this before the Park Board in March. Once approved by the boards, it will go back to Council and Committee of the Whole for approval.

### **Football Complex**

Brett Kaschinske stated we have been talking with Mid-Michigan Youth Football (MMYF) and the Jr. Quakers. MMYF currently plays at several locations, Risdale Park, Southside Schmidt Community Center and St. Joe Park.

What would enhance this program is what you see in the suburbs, which are youth fields with bleachers, restrooms, scoreboards and the ability to separate spectators from players.

This program is made up of mostly Lansing minority youth.

Rick Kibbey inquired what will happen to the Jr. Quakers with the sale of Eastern High School.

Dennis Louney has a history with the program and he believes they may talk with Lansing Catholic Central.

Bryan Beverly stated there is a portion of the school property which will be repurposed.

Brett Kaschinske state he met with Bob Johnson, Planning and Neighborhood Development who deals with community development block grant (CDBG) funds. He has worked with Bob Johnson and Risdale Park fits the CDBG requirements.

Brett Kaschinske reviewed the map and layout of the facility. The project is out for bid at this time and the plan is to complete by fall. If the cost comes in too high, the project may be done in stages.

Bryan Beverly asked why Risdale and not St. Joe Park. Kaschinske stated St. Joe is not CDBG eligible, plus St. Joe was a tight area to fit the complex into with St. Joe Road, McPherson Street and the train tracks.

Rita O'Brien inquired if it will affect the community gardens at Risdale. Kaschinske stated no.

Dennis Louney commented to be sure the league has appropriate officials, insurance and security and to secure it in writing.

Brett Kaschinske stated meetings have occurred and included the Parks Department, MMYF leadership, Lansing Police and Faith Based Initiative.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **Bancroft Park**

Brett Kaschinske stated the Park Board sent a letter to the drain commissioner, Pat Lindemann. A response was received today which consists of 121 pages of documentation.

Rick Kibbey stated since this was received today and it is 121 pages, he does not want to discuss it tonight, but would like discussion to take place between board members via e-mail.

Rick Kibbey wants to be there when the trees are cut and encourages board members to attend also.

Rosalinda Hernandez said according to her conversation with Pat Lindemann, there are 7 trees which will need to be cut and 4 of them are dead. He also stated for every tree removed he would replace with 3 new trees.

Brett Kaschinske stated our Forestry staff will be meeting with Pat Lindemann and Brian Cenci from ENG regarding the trees and various diseases.

Rick Kibbey stated in March the Board will have the benefit of Mr. Lindemann's comments and he is looking for a joint understanding between the board and friends. He wants a shared opinion with the friends and hopes we can take Pat Lindemann's word as final.

Rita O'Brien referred to the friend's statement that they do not want the path paved. She read Mr. Lindemann's statement found on page 8 of his response:

*"To clearly state my position I will not be changing the design of this project which was agreed upon by the Lansing Park Board, Lansing City Council, the Mayor of Lansing and hundreds of participating citizens through public hearings, one-on-one meetings, small group meetings, meetings at citizens homes, dozens if not hundreds of phone conversations. This design does represent the will of the people. It is not in the best interest of this park to change the design which will broaden the protection of the park while allowing many more residents to enjoy it."*

*"I have received comments from many people who had a part in the public input on this issue in the past. They were pleased with the outcome, they want a paved path. They told me that they feel hurt and brushed aside by Mr. Potter's statements that no public input took place. I told them that their concerns would be mentioned in my letter back to you."*

Veronica Gracia-Wing stated from what she has read, she does not see what else the Park Board can entertain.

Becky Palmer-Scott stated she is concerned with the removal of Angel Hill because it is a landmark and the only sled hill in Lansing with a name.

Brett Kaschinske stated a proposal was made to move dirt from the golf course into Bancroft Park and create a new hill; however the friends rejected the proposal. There are other hills on Groesbeck to sled.

Rita O'Brien and Veronica Gracia-Wing made reference to page 77 of Mr. Lindemann's response which states:

*"As a result of the proposed expansion of storm water control and wetland mitigation areas, to improve water quality and create a more diverse aquatic ecosystem, the sledding hill downslope area will be reduced. The hill could still be used for sledding but the length of the run will be reduced by about one-third."*

Phillip Lamoureux mentioned the possibility of putting a hump at the bottom of the hill to slow down sleds.

Jeff Potter inquired if the path could be 5 or 6 feet instead of 10 foot. He also mentioned Donna Timm went door to door in the neighborhood and 59 of the 60 people she spoke with are against paving the path.

Veronica Gracia-Wing inquired if when she went door to door was it simply a yes or no question or was supporting documentation presented.

Bryan Beverly stated he hopes the friends have found an empathetic ear. The Board has met on site and has voiced concerns to Mr. Lindemann. There was a process and for better or worse, this is what we have. Since this project started, there have been changes within this board and within Council. The Park Board will continue to advocate and we are looking for solutions, however the plan is the plan.

Jeff Potter stated he spoke with Mr. Lindemann in the summer and Lindemann stated he would consider changes to the plan if the Board made the suggestions.

Bryan Beverly stated there is a considerable amount of due diligence in Mr. Lindemann's report and though he does not care for the phrase, he must admit it is what it is.

### **Concept Baseball**

Brett Kaschinske stated this was presented at the meeting last month and he would like to know from the Board if there are any sites they are opposed to.

Veronica Gracia-Wing recommended sharing the wealth since Beacon Field is already at Ferris Park.

Brett Kaschinske stated it could go at one of our youth baseball sites, or one of the adult baseball sites and the only community center it would fit would be at Gier Community Center.

The pluses for Ferris Park are the homes face the park and there is traffic which helps with visibility and security. The neighborhood also embraces projects.

The current cost estimates are higher than expected, around \$400,000.00. This project would have to be funded similar to the way Beacon Field was.

Kaschinske inquired if the Board wants to discuss here tonight or via e-mail.

Bryan Beverly inquired if there have been conversations with the Lugnuts.

Kaschinske stated he would like to talk with Scott Keith from LEPFA.

Rick Kibbey asked for sketches of the facility in a couple proposed parks.

### **Diverse Activities**

Brett Kaschinske read the January minutes where he asked Dwight Washington to receive his comments to put on the February agenda. Kaschinske stated he did not receive any information from Mr. Washington, but feels the proposed football complex fits with the Master Plan on providing diverse recreational opportunities.

### **Zipline**

Brett Kaschinske stated this is on the Development and Planning committee agenda for tomorrow, Thursday, February 11, 2016.

### **Ingham Trails**

The recommendations from Mannick Smith are still in draft report form, but the link has been sent to board members and can be shared with neighborhood groups.

Meeting adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted: Kellie Brown, Park Board Secretary

Approved March 9, 2016